



**3rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command
16th Sustainment Brigade
Public Affairs Office**

Contingency Operating Base Q-West, Iraq
DSN (NIPR) 318-827-6101
DSN (SIPR) 302-243-5104
keith.anderson@iraq.centcom.mil

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Soldiers save pull tabs for cancer research

By Capt. Natalia Mercedes-Williams
18th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion

CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE MAREZ-EAST, Iraq — For Soldiers of the 18th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, collecting the pull tabs from their soda cans is a daily activity.

Soldiers are donating pull tabs to support Pull Tabs for Charity, Inc., a Bethesda, Md.-based charitable organization that splits proceeds from the pull tabs among the National Cancer Institute of the U.S. National Institutes of Health, and the Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC), according to the charity's website. The charity is also committed to raising awareness of the many benefits of recycling on a global basis.

Spc. Amanda Law, 158th Maintenance Company, Alabama Army National Guard, and native of Eclectic, Ala., said she got involved with the charity after she lost a loved one to cancer.

"I decided to start this because my aunt passed away in 2007 from cancer, and I thought this would be a great opportunity to try to help the research for cancer," Law said. "My personal goal is to help raise funds for cancer research and awareness."

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Law said she is making progress collecting pull tabs.

“I have been doing this since January,” Law said. “I have collected about 500 tabs. I have four collection bins that I have throughout the company.”

After the aluminum pull tabs are collected, they are sent to Pull Tabs for Charity, Inc., where they are weighed and taken to a local metal recycler for immediate processing and accounting. The reimbursement is made by check and deposited into an escrow account for subsequent donation to NCI and RMHC, according to information from the charity.

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Spc. Amanda Law, 158th Maintenance Company, Alabama Army National Guard, and native of Eclectic, Ala., collects pull tabs from Sgt. Carl Schultz, 506th Quartermaster Co., 18th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, at Contingency Operating Site Marez-East, Iraq, June 2, 2009. (Photo by Capt. Natalia Mercedes-Williams)